

Madam Speaker, when Sergeant Hartman volunteered to put his life on the line for his country, it was with the hope that he would never be required to make that ultimate sacrifice. But it was God's will that his life be cut short on that road in Iraq. We as a Nation need to remember SFC David Hartman and all the brave individuals who have died for our freedom. I ask the House of Representatives to join me and keep their memory in our hearts and prayers.

COMMENDING THE EMPLOYEES OF
PORT ST. LUCIE'S FINANCE DE-
PARTMENT

HON. TIM MAHONEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 15, 2007

Mr. MAHONEY of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend the hardworking employees of the City of Port St. Lucie's Finance Department. For the 16th consecutive year, the city's Finance Department has been recognized for excellence and professionalism in the way they account for public money. The Government Finance Officers Association, a professional association of State and local finance officers in the United States and Canada, recognized the department with their Excellence Award because of the high quality of their 2006 comprehensive annual financial report.

The 16,000 member Government Finance Officer's Association said "the certificate of achievement is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management." It is my honor to commend the city of Port St. Lucie's finance director, Marcia Dedert and her staff for their dedication in assuring that all public funds are accounted for and transparent to the residents of the city.

The Finance Department of Port St. Lucie has truly exemplified their own mission statement to accurately maintain the financial records of the city pursuant to all legal requirements and to safeguard the City's financial assets. After 16 consecutive years of winning such a prestigious award, Port St. Lucie has clearly established themselves as one of the leading finance departments in the Nation, and I am proud to have the opportunity to represent such an outstanding city.

THANKING DEAN AGUILLEN FOR
HIS SERVICE TO THIS CONGRESS

HON. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 15, 2007

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I rise to thank Dean Aguilén for the service he has provided to this Congress and the American people.

Dean's final day with us is today; however, I believe that a friendship and working relationship will continue for years to come.

During my first term in Congress, Dean was a great assistance to my office and me. He helped with the transition and acclimation from being a local county supervisor to Congress.

Dean has accomplished quite a bit in his career within the Capital, but I want to take time to thank him for the way in which he became successful.

Dean is an extremely hardworker and he does the multiple jobs and responsibilities with a smile, patience, respect, and understanding. He has taken care of all of the Democratic members, but I have also seen him take time to recruit and help young staff learn the ropes so they too can be successful.

Dean has made a great impact on many Members and staff.

I wish him the best of luck and know that success will continue to be a part of his life.

Thank you Dean for your patience, kindness, and commitment to this country and to our community.

THE ARAPAHO/ROOSEVELT NA-
TIONAL FORESTS LAND EX-
CHANGE ACT OF 2007

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 15, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing a bill that will help the Forest Service better manage an area near St. Mary's Glacier and Alice Township in Clear Creek County, Colorado and will also allow an appropriate new use of adjoining private lands.

The area dealt with in the bill is currently latticed with various mining claims interspersed with Forest Service land, which creates management difficulties. It is also an area proposed for a ski area terrain park, called Eclipse Snow Park. By facilitating a land exchange between the Forest Service and the developers of this terrain park, the bill would resolve issues for the Forest Service, the terrain park and the surrounding communities.

This legislation provides for the exchange of approximately 119 acres of National Forest System land with approximately 74 acres of private property (plus any necessary cash adjustment from private parties to the United States Treasury necessary to equalize the value of the parcels), contiguous to existing National Forest System land.

Currently, the boundary lines between the National Forest System land and the privately owned property are extremely irregular, making much of this mountainous land inaccessible and burdensome to the public. These jagged boundaries also make managing the National Forest System land difficult, if not impossible, for the agency.

This legislation simplifies the boundaries and consolidates National Forest System lands adjacent to Alice and the St. Mary's Glacier, in turn enhancing water quality protection opportunities for the St. Mary's Glacier watershed. In addition, this land exchange eliminates land-locked National Forest System lands and makes contiguous certain privately owned property, thus enabling efficient use of a decades old tradition of family-scaled commercial skiing in this basin.

In addition, the land exchange authorized by this bill would help provide access to the nearby James Peak Wilderness Area. Public access to this area from the Alice Township community is currently unavailable. Frequent trespassing, the lack of adequate parking and

no public access to the St. Mary's glacier area are major concerns for surrounding residents, the community, and the Forest Service. With the valley's close proximity to Denver, the presence and uniqueness of the glacier has become an attraction for hikers, backcountry skiers, and sight-seers. The frequency of visitors, especially during the summer, creates a parking, access, and trailhead sanitation dilemma. This land exchange provides a solution to these problems by providing needed parking areas and creating a public access trailhead, at no expense to taxpayers.

Although efforts have been made with the Forest Service to seek an administrative solution, the Forest Service estimates this process would take a minimum of 5 years—a delay that withholds the above-described benefits to the public. Therefore, legislation is needed to accomplish this important land exchange.

Commercial skiing has taken place in the Anchor Gulch basin, in which the current proposed Eclipse Snow Park is located, since the 1930s. That ski area has gone through many different names and ownership groups including Silver Mountain Resort, St. Mary's Ski Area, and Silver Lake Resort. It most recently operated in 1986 with two ski lifts. The ski area pre-dates major zoning concerns in the county, and operated almost exclusively on a collection of mining claims as well as illegally on some National Forest System land.

In 2001, the Clear Creek County Commissioners unanimously passed a resolution recognizing the ski area at St. Mary's as a "legal non-conforming use" affirming the County's desire to see the property used for skiing again. In late 2006 and early 2007, through a process which included months of public hearings, the Clear Creek County Commissioners approved the rezoning of all the property in the Anchor Gulch basin proposed by Eclipse Snow Park to a "Commercial Outdoor Recreation" designation which allows for commercial skiing and limited associated recreation amenities.

Eclipse Snow Park aims to become a small family-owned and operated ski area which harkens back to the days when skiing began in Colorado. The Vision for Eclipse will provide a predominantly natural un-groomed more natural Alpine Skiing experience. With a specific focus on gladed skiing, as opposed to traditional cleared trails, Eclipse will provide a unique, environmentally sensitive and increasingly sought recreation experience. Additionally, the vision will create a small-scale, organic ski area which fulfills a "back-to-the-basics" response to why people love to ski, with fewer commercialized aspects that many large scale resorts implement. Eclipse Snow Park will welcome skiers and snowboarders alike who are interested in a unique skiing and riding experience, at a more affordable price, with a far shorter travel distance than most Front-Range skiers are currently experiencing.

Eclipse Snow Park representatives have been in numerous discussions with the Forest Service, who have expressed interest in this land exchange but citing resource constraints, have stated a preference for legislative action. The Forest Service on several occasions over the past two summer field seasons has sent interdisciplinary teams of biologists, botanists, and ecologists into the Anchor Gulch basin to inventory surrounding resources and evaluate the project proposal for potential environmental impacts and opportunities to apply state-of-the-art mitigating techniques.